IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers, comprising:

a base including at least one cylindrical wall extending therefrom, said at least one cylindrical wall forming a wafer containment area therewithin, at least a portion of said at least one cylindrical wall being segmented thereby forming slots within said at least one cylindrical wall, said slots receiving spacer elements which extend into said wafer containment area thereby positioning a plurality of semiconductor wafers away from said at least one cylindrical wall;

said spacer elements comprising a flexible material, whereby said spacer elements can be installed after a plurality of semiconductor wafers have been placed in said wafer containment area and further whereby said spacer elements can be removed prior to removal of the plurality of semiconductor wafers; and

a lid which includes means for engaging said base, said lid forming a top of the containment device when said base and said lid are attached together.

2. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 1 wherein said at least one cylindrical wall extends perpendicularly from said base.

3. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 1 wherein said means for engaging said base includes slots which receive prongs which are formed on said base.

4. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 1 wherein said lid includes a lid cylindrical wall which, when said base and said lid are attached together, fits immediately outwardly adjacent from said at least one cylindrical wall of said base.

5. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 1 wherein said slots are formed periodically around said at least one cylindrical wall.

6. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 1 wherein said at least one cylindrical wall includes at least one gap which is larger than said slots.

7. (currently amended) [[The]] A containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers ~~of Claim 1 wherein~~, comprising:

a base including at least one cylindrical wall extending therefrom, said at least one cylindrical wall forming a wafer containment area therewithin, at least a portion of said at least one cylindrical wall being segmented thereby forming slots within said at least one cylindrical wall, said slots receiving spacer elements which extend into said wafer containment area;

a lid which includes means for engaging said base, said lid forming a top of the containment device when said base and said lid are attached together; and

said spacer elements ~~include~~ including grooves which capture edges of said at least one cylindrical wall which form said slots and further ~~include~~ including fins which extend into said wafer containment area.

8. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 7 wherein said spacer elements are formed by extrusion.

9. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 8 wherein said spacer elements are sufficiently soft to form a cushion for semiconductor wafers in said wafer containment area.

10. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 1 further including arcuate shielding walls formed around said slots in said at least one cylindrical wall.

11. (currently amended) A containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers, comprising:

a base including an inner concentric cylindrical wall and an outer concentric cylindrical wall extending therefrom, said inner concentric cylindrical wall forming a wafer containment area therewithin, at least a portion of said inner and outer concentric cylindrical walls being segmented thereby forming slots within said inner and outer concentric cylindrical walls, said slots receiving spacer elements which extend into said wafer containment area thereby positioning a plurality of semiconductor wafers away from said inner concentric cylindrical wall;

said spacer elements comprising a flexible material, whereby said spacer elements can be installed after a plurality of semiconductor wafers have been placed in said wafer containment area and further whereby said spacer elements can be removed prior to removal of the plurality of semiconductor wafers; and

a lid which includes means for engaging said base, said lid forming a top of the containment device when said base and said lid are attached together.

12. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 11 wherein said inner and outer concentric cylindrical walls extend perpendicularly from said base.

13. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 11 wherein said means for engaging said base includes slots which receive prongs which are formed on said base.

14. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 11 wherein said lid includes a lid cylindrical wall which, when said base and said lid are attached together, fits immediately outwardly adjacent from said outer concentric cylindrical wall of said base.

15. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 11 wherein said slots are formed periodically around said inner and outer concentric cylindrical walls.

16. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 11 wherein said inner and outer concentric cylindrical walls include at least one gap which is larger than said slots.

17. (currently amended) ~~The~~ A containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers ~~of Claim 11 wherein said spacer elements~~, comprising:

a base including an inner concentric cylindrical wall and an outer concentric cylindrical wall extending therefrom, said inner concentric cylindrical wall forming a wafer containment area therewithin, at least a portion of said inner and outer concentric cylindrical walls being segmented thereby forming slots within said inner and outer concentric cylindrical walls, said slots receiving spacer elements which extend into said wafer containment area and include a cylindrical head and tail extending therefrom; and

a lid which includes means for engaging said base, said lid forming a top of the containment device when said base and said lid are attached together.

18. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 17 wherein said tail includes teeth extending therefrom.

19. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 18 wherein said spacer elements are sufficiently soft to form a cushion for semiconductor wafers in said wafer containment area.

20. (original) The containment device for retaining semiconductor wafers of Claim 17 wherein said cylindrical head is sufficiently large to prevent said cylindrical head from passing through said slots.